

Message Text

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16

ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4057

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 8966

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SP

SUBJ: CONVERSATION WITH MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR FRAGA

1. I PAID A COURTESY CALL ON MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR FRAGA THIS EVENING, HE RECEIVED ME CORDIALLY AND AT THE END OF OUR HALF-HOUR CONVERSATION, I HAD THE VERY DISTINCT FEELING THAT I HAD BEEN THROUGH A WIND TUNNEL. HE IS A MAN OF INTENSE DRIVE AND ENERGY AND HAS OBVIOUSLY TAKEN UPON HIMSELF THE MAJOR RESPONSIBILITY OF BRINGING ABOUT THE EVOLUTION OF SPAIN TOWARD A MORE DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY. HE STRESSED HIS DESIRE FOR A CLOSER RELATIONSHIP WITH ME.

2. I BEGAN THE CONVERSATION BY ASSURING FRAGA THAT THERE WOULD BE NO PRESSURE FROM THE US TO GO AT ANY FASTER PACE IN ITS EVOLUTION THAN WAS ACCEPTABLE AND TOLERABLE TO CONDITIONS EXISTING IN SPAIN. WE BELIEVE THOSE WHO ARE PRESSING FOR A FASTER PACE ARE DOING A DISSERVICE TO ALL. I ALSO SAID THAT WE FULLY SHARED THE PUBLIC VIEWS EXPRESSED BY FRAGA THAT IN THE EVOLUTION OF SPAIN TOWARD A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY, THERE COULD BE NO PLACE FOR THE SPANISH COMMUNIST PARTY.

3. FRAGA EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR MY ASSURANCES AND SAID THAT HE HOPED THAT HE COULD COUNT ON US FOR ADVICE AND COUNSEL AS SPAIN GOES ALONG THE ROAD WHICH IT IS NOW CHARTING, I ASSURED HIM THAT HE COULD.

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4. FRAGA INDICATED THAT HE AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT WERE NOW WORKING ON AN OVERALL PROGRAM WHICH WOULD BE PRESENTED BY PRIME MINISTER ARIAS TO THE CORTES THE END OF JANUARY. THIS PROGRAM WOULD FILL OUT THE GENERAL DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES WHICH HAD BEEN RELEASED LAST WEEK. THE PROGRAM WOULD BE A FAIRLY COMPLETE ONE, BUT IT MIGHT NOT CONTAIN ALL OF THE IDEAS THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS NOW DEVELOPING.

5. FRAGA SAID THAT HE WAS NOW INTENT ON WORKING WITH THE POLICE AND WITH THE CIVIL GOVERNORS TO TRY TO INTRODUCE A NEW STYLE INTO PUBLIC ORDER ACTIVITIES. IT WAS NECESSARY TO PREPARE THE TERRAIN NOW FOR THE PROGRAM WHICH THE GOVERNMENT WANTED TO UNDERTAKE. HE RECOGNIZED THAT THERE WERE RISKS AND DANGERS AND THAT THERE WOULD, INDEED, BE CASUALTIES. THE RIGHT WAS NERVOUS, BUT HE THOUGHT THIS WAS MANAGEABLE. THEY HAD ATTACKED THE FOREIGN MINISTER FOR HIS REMARKS ON SANTIAGO CARRILLO BECAUSE HE WAS AN EASIER TARGET THAN FRAGA HIMSELF. WITH REGARD TO THE EXTREME LEFT, THERE WERE DANGERS FROM THIS QUARTER AND HE DID NOT DOUBT BUT THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD HAVE TO FACE RESUMPTION OF VIOLENCE AND TERRORIST ATTACKS IN THE NOT DISTANT FUTURE. HE PERSONALLY RECOGNIZED THE COMMUNISTS AS REPRESENTING A CONSIDERABLE DANGER FOR SPAIN.

6. WITH REGARD TO OTHER POLITICAL FORMATIONS, FRAGA SAID THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO SEE A LARGE SOCIALIST GROUPING CREATED. HE SAID HE DID NOT USE THE WORD "PARTY" BECAUSE THAT HAD VERY NEGATIVE CONNOTATIONS IN SPAIN, IT WAS MUCH TOO EARLY TO THINK IN THESE TERMS, BUT AT THE SAME TIME, EFFORTS SHOULD BE MADE TO CREATE THE POLITICAL FORMATIONS TO BRING ABOUT GREATER PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL LIFE. HE SAID HE HAD RECENTLY DINED WITH TIerno GALVAN OF THE PSP WHO WAS AN OLD FRIEND. THE OBJECTIVE OF THIS WAS TO TRY TO WEAN TIerno GALVAN AWAY FROM THE COMMUNIST-INSPIRED JUNTA DEMOCRATICA. EVEN THOUGH THE PSP APPEARED TO BE TO THE LEFT OF THE PSOE, THE FACT WAS THAT FELIPE GONZALEZ WAS MORE RADICAL THAN TIerno GALVAN. FRAGA SAID IT WAS TOO EARLY TO KNOW WHAT SUCCESS MIGHT COME OF THESE EFFORTS.

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7. FRAGA SAID THAT HIS MINISTRY WAS BUSILY WORKING ON A WHOLE VARIETY OF PROJECTS, PARTICULARLY ON CERTAIN PROPOSALS BETTER TO GUARANTEE CIVIL RIGHTS. HE MADE THE POINT THAT THERE WAS NO QUESTION OF TRYING TO CHANGE EVERYTHING OVERNIGHT. IT WAS NECESSARY TO DECIDE WHAT THE BASIC PROGRAM SHOULD BE AND THEN TO DETERMINE THE PROPER RHYTHM WITH WHICH TO CARRY OUT THIS PROGRAM. HE WAS

HOPEFUL, BUT RECOGNIZED THE PROBLEMS THAT LAY AHEAD.
STABLER

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